



Hood River News

Official Newspaper, City of Hood River and Hood River County

HOOD RIVER, OREGON ■ WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2008

www.hoodrivernews.com

Bridge work begins

ODOT projects start under I-84 at Cascade Locks

By SUE RYAN
News staff writer

Black drift fences and one backhoe parked on a hill are among the signs that construction work is imminent for Interstate 84 near Exit 44 in Cascade Locks.

Wildish Standard Paving, of Eugene, has begun preparatory work for a multi-year project to repair and replace bridges along the highway in Hood River County.

That includes replacing two bridges and repairing five between Cascade Locks and Hood River. The work is expected to last through Nov. 2010. Most of it will be invisible to passers-by as it will take place out of sight under the freeway.

But the most visible phase will be the first, which involves the replacement bridge near Exit 44 in Cascade Locks. Interstate 84 crosses a bridge over Highway 30, where it accesses both the freeway and Frontage Road near the weigh station.

The first step will be to build a detour bridge, which is expected to begin in three weeks. The next steps involve demolishing the old bridges, one at a time, and rebuilding new ones.

The Oregon Department of Transportation is spending \$1.3 billion on the statewide bridge improvements, which it has contracted out to another agency. Jason Ruth is the construction coordinator for the contractor, Oregon Bridge Delivery Partners.

"The reason why we're repairing and replacing bridges is due to increased freight loads Oregon is seeing," he said.

Those freight loads come primarily from trucks. As weight passes over bridges, pressure transfers downward. Bridges sustain weight first through a con-

Please see ODOT, Page A12

A12 Hood River News, Wednesday, August 6, 2008

ODOT

Continued from Page A1

crete deck, then by girders to crossbeams to columns and finally the ground.

During inspections of Oregon bridges in 2001, engineers found diagonal-tension cracks indicating bridges needed reinforcing to handle the strain. In 2003, the state legislature passed the Oregon Transportation Investment Act III, a \$2.46-billion package that includes the \$1.3 billion to fix bridges.

Preliminary work at Cascade Locks to relocate a utility under the bridge that crosses Highway 30 has been completed and contractors have installed silt fences to prevent erosion. Signs have also been erected for traffic control; although Ruth emphasized that traffic isn't expected to be delayed but only slowed down by the work.

"There will be very temporary impacts for shifting traffic," he said.

"There will be a couple of periods when we need to close the



Photo by Sue Ryan

WORKERS relocated utilities last week under the Interstate 84 bridge at Exit 44 in Cascade Locks. It was done to prepare the area for the building of a new bridge.

highway when we demolish the old bridges and set the concrete girders."

Ruth said OBDP is working with the Cascade Locks port of entry weigh station to minimize impacts on trucks coming from Washington to weigh in and also heading through eastbound.

The five repair bridges include Frontage Road (Second Street) bridge over Union Pacific Railroad, eastbound I-84 over the railroad at milepost 47.3, Interstate 84

over Herman Creek Connector and Interstate 84 at milepost 47.3 and over Moody Street at milepost 43.9.

Among the other repairs are plans to strengthen concrete through various methods of pressurizing it. Ruth said the analysis at Moody Street, for example, showed that the crossbeams needed strengthening. To add support to the existing concrete, workers will be drilling a hole through the cross beam and inserting a steel

rod into the beam.

"They then pull on the rod, which pushes on the concrete and gives more resistance," Ruth said.

"It's known as post-tensioning."

At Moody Street, workers will also be putting in steel bars and sealing with epoxy.

For more information and up-to-date traffic details, visit www.tripcheck.com

Reprinted with permission from *Hood River News*.